

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 10-12 and 21 are pending. Claims 9 and 13-20 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 9-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being unpatentable over Shoroff et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,023,744) in view of Jeon (U. S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0028614) and Microsoft Dictionary, where the dictionary was used solely as an evidentiary reference.

As to amended claim 10, the Examiner indicated that the additional space which is to be used to increase the size of the target file must possess the specification (such as additional size needed and same logic format) that the system needs. However, neither Shoroff et al. nor Jeon discloses any notification to the remote system of the specification for the remote storage area to be utilized. And it is true that a general mounting operation requires the same logic format for a space to mount from a remote storage system, but the operation does not necessarily notify the size of the space to the remote storage system.

In addition to the above, claim 10 has been amended to restrict the "specification" to a size and a performance (speed of reading and/or writing), so that the difference between the present claimed invention and the cited references become apparent. This amendment is based on the paragraph [0027] in the specification as originally filed, and so new matter has been added.

As to amended claim 11, the Examiner seems to compare deciding whether or not the storage area in a local storage system is to be increased according to the utilization state of the remote storage in the present invention with determining whether or not the target file is to be increased according to how much empty space is remaining in the target file itself in Shoroff et al. The present invention is intended to expand a local storage area by loading a physical disk unit to the local storage system instead of mounting a remote storage area. To this end, claim 11 has been amended to clarify that the expansion is caused by loading a spare disk unit. This amendment is based on the paragraph [0044] in the specification as originally filed, and thus does not add new matter.

Claim 12 has been amended to be in independent form, incorporating only the subject matter of its base claim 9. As to claim 12, the Examiner seems to find the present claimed subject matter is that data stored and managed in the LOCAL storage area is copied to the local storage area when the local storage area is enlarged. But it is believed that the Examiner's finding is not correct. The present invention definitely claims that data stored and managed in the REMOTE storage area is copied to the local storage area when the local storage area is enlarged.

As to claim 21, the port ID in claim 11 identifies not a file but a disk unit while the Examiner found the port ID as a file information maintained in records in master file table 50. And the identifiers of the first and second disk unit literally identifies a disk unit, while the Examiner found the identifier as a position of a file such as pointers 78 and 82 tracking the point of the target file in Shoroff. Claim 21 has been amended to clarify that a port ID specifies a disk unit installed on the system. In addition, claim 21 has also been amended to clarify that the target to which the port ID corresponds changes, after the mounting operation, from an identifier of an installed local disk unit to an identifier of the provided remote disk unit.

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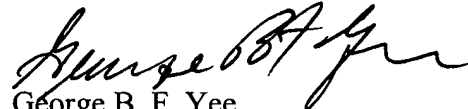
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, all claims now pending in this Application are believed to be in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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